



Security Council

Sixty-first year

Provisional

5556th meeting

 Thursday, 26 October 2006, 3 p.m.
 New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Oshima	(Japan)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina	Mr. Estremé
	China	Mr. Li Kexin
	Congo	Mr. Gayama
	Denmark	Mr. Christensen
	France	Mr. De Riviére
	Ghana	Mr. Beliwine
	Greece	Mrs. Papadopoulou
	Peru	Ms. Tincopa
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Ansari
	Russian Federation	Mr. Zheglov
	Slovakia	Ms. Halászová
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Manongi
	United States of America	Ms. Phee

Agenda

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2006/770)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

06-58804 (E)



The meeting resumed at 3.05 p.m.

The President. I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Liechtenstein in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representative of Liechtenstein took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President. I remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber. I thank representatives in advance for their cooperation.

I give the floor to Mrs. Christine Miturumbwe, Coordinator of the Dushirhamwe Association.

Mrs. Miturumbwe (*spoke in French*): I would like to say how pleased I am to be here today to tell the Security Council and the international community in general about the concerns and expectations of the women of Burundi in the context of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

I would also like to express my gratitude to the United Nations system as a whole for its efforts to help Burundian women throughout the reconciliation process.

Burundi has just emerged from a war that lasted more than 10 years and caused a great deal of harm in both human and material terms. Very recently, in September, the Government and the Forces nationales de libération-Parti pour la libération du peuple hutu (FNL-PALIPEHUTU) signed a ceasefire agreement. Burundian men and women have welcomed that step but remain convinced that sustained efforts must

continue with a view to overcoming the many challenges of the peacebuilding period.

Burundian women, who have committed themselves to the quest for peace since independence in 1961, continue to work to mobilize and to heighten awareness of the need for better representation throughout the decision-making process so as to ensure that their rights are an integral part of negotiations. The right of succession, which would guarantee women the right to land and thus provide for their economic security, was among the important issues considered during the Arusha process. Despite progress at the national level, we have to admit that our Constitution and the Electoral Code say nothing about the proper level of representation at the grassroots level. In fact, the national gender policy lacks resources to implement the principles of equality at the national level. Burundian women have been active since the peace talks, and the details of those activities can be found in the documents distributed to you. There have been consultations among women at the national level in the context of implementing resolution 1325 (2000), and the recommendations of those consultations can be summed up as follows.

Concerning good governance and democracy, it is important to ensure constant dialogue between the Government, the political parties and the media. In this dialogue, general interest should take precedence over individual interest. For good, transparent and inclusive governance, it is important not only to ensure cooperation and dialogue at all levels, down to the local level, but also to include all social groups, especially women. In this connection, it should be noted that the principle of a 30-per-cent quota is applied only for a limited portion of the population and is not reflected at the grassroots level. Furthermore, this quota should be 50 per cent.

We recommend that the international community continue to lend its support to Burundi, so that the capacity-building programme for good governance, which includes transparency, proper management of public affairs, democracy and respect for human rights, might remain a priority. A joint committee made up of members of organizations from civil society and Government should be set up to ensure follow-up in the management of all national resources, including resources granted by international organizations. The current quota of 30 per cent should, in fact, be raised to 50 per cent and be applied at the local level. Civil

society should be considered an active partner in all programmes and processes.

Concerning demobilization, disarmament, reintegration and reinsertion (DDRR), we should note that this process is slowly moving forward. Among the important challenges facing Burundi, we should give special attention to the following: circulation of weapons among the population, which is a source of insecurity and constant tension, particularly for women; victims, namely, ex-combatants and persons who have been repatriated or displaced, primarily women, have not yet received restitution and resort to community conflict and violence; the recently established National Commission for Land and Other Property, which was welcomed by women. Unfortunately, its functioning and the implementation of its recommendations require not only mobilization of substantial resources but also know-how and experience in that field. We firmly hope that the new Peacebuilding Commission, established as part of United Nations reform, will make support for the National Commission Land and Other Property one of its priorities. The lack of programmes to help so-called political prisoners who have been released adds to the problem of insecurity.

Failure of the DDRR programme would compromise achievements we have made towards peace and democracy. We recommend that the international community continue to give its political, technical and financial support to the Government of Burundi, so that disarmament, reintegration and reinsertion might become a reality on the ground. The international community should support civil society in Burundi in its efforts to mobilize and promote awareness among the population about the dangers of possession and circulation of weapons in the community and to promote voluntary disarmament. A similar programme could be carried out at the subregional level.

Since the end of hostilities, poverty has continued to increase in Burundi and is affecting, above all, women, who cannot inherit land from their parents and cannot gain title to their husband's land and property. In addition to dependence, corruption and fraud are exacerbating the status of women. Women have always asked that this be given priority in negotiations.

We recommend that the United Nations not hold women hostage to the political situation in Burundi and

that women be enabled to have direct access to financing that allows them to undertake and consolidate the work that they have been doing at the grassroots level. Funds allocated by the Peacebuilding Commission should be used for that work. The Commission should ensure follow-up to the implementation of a corruption and fraud focal point that would ensure equitable distribution of public property. The focal point should also respect gender parity.

As for human rights, it should be emphasized that these challenges refer to basic aspects of human rights, for which we would like to make several recommendations in order to promote respect for those rights. Legislation for gender equality and equity should be adopted and applied. There should be an independent national focal point for women's rights to ensure implementation of commitments made by the Government under national legislation and international treaties ratified by Burundi. There should be an end to impunity through the establishment of machinery for transitional justice to deal with rape and murder. That would require the reform and modernization of the police and legal services, which must be professional in spirit and directly accountable to the people. A trust fund should be established to which Member States would contribute for at least five years to enable women who are victims of sexual violence and other abuses to have recourse to justice. There should be support for organizations helping women, in particular United Nations Development Fund for Women, with material, financial and human resources adequate to reach additional beneficiaries.

The President: I now give the floor to Ms. Maria Diaz, President of Rede Feto.

Ms. Diaz (spoke in Spanish): I should like to thank the members of the Security Council for this opportunity to participate in the open debate and the delegation of Japan for inviting me to describe the situation in East Timor, in particular the role of women in peacebuilding. I represent Rede Feto, a network of women's groups that is present throughout the country. On 28 April, to the surprise and dismay of all the people who have been working so hard to consolidate peace in East Timor, armed conflict broke out again. The crisis was caused by bad governance, weak government institutions, corruption, a lack of respect for basic human rights and the lack of empowerment, which leads to disappointment in youth, who were the

main actors in the conflict. Innocent citizens lost their families and their scant possessions. For example, a woman and her six children were burned alive inside their house, merely because she was the relative of a controversial minister. Many couples are forced to separate temporarily for their security as a result of the North-South conflict. Thousands of students have had to give up their studies for lack of security or because schools have been burned down or merely because they come from the north of the country.

In the struggle for reconstruction, we women have played and continue to play a crucial role. Members of Rede Feto have tried to mediate between the two parties to the current conflict. We made the men sit down at the table, and we invited them to talk to each other. Right now, we are engaged in talks, both with the head of the rebels as well as with the leaders of the armed forces to bring about a meeting between them, so they can discuss the possibility of putting an end to hostilities. In collaboration with other civil society organizations, we are also meeting and working with youth gangs in towns and refugee camps to find out what these boys and girls need in peacetime. These boys and girls have tremendous problems. They need education, work, hope and self-respect.

The fact that the conflict flared up again shows us that there are at least five important elements involved in preventing future outbreaks of violence. First, there is the participation of women and youth, who have been significantly marginalized in the decision-making processes. Their inclusion is particularly urgent, because young people, specifically, young men, are the main perpetrators of the current conflict, having been manipulated in large part to pursue violent acts that were initially carried out by the rebels, the police and the military.

Secondly, the treatment and resolution of trauma is necessary for everyone, in particular, to avoid that the wounds of trauma suffered will create another dangerous situation.

Thirdly, we need economic security. We have to create work opportunities for all male and female persons, in particular, for young people and women.

Fourthly, we need justice. We must bring before the courts all the perpetrators of the acts of violence that took place this year. We must resolve the 2,500 pending cases, most of which involve sexual or domestic violence.

Finally, we need security. It is urgent international police forces throughout Timor-Leste enlarged, particularly in the context of the upcoming elections to be held in 2007.

To achieve long-term peace and stability in Timor-Leste, we must invest in education and promote a culture of peace and gender balance. It is particularly urgent to strengthen the Vulnerable Persons Unit. Governmental and civil society mechanisms must provide support to victims, particularly those who have suffered gender-based violence. It is equally necessary to create a parliamentary committee that will monitor gender balance. Similarly, I would like to voice my great satisfaction at the very significant gender content of the recent assessment mission of the United Nations to Timor-Leste. I hope that the recommendations of the Secretary-General's report will be implemented and that the organizations that work with women's groups, such as the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), will be adequately funded.

In view of the foregoing, we have the following recommendations to make. We call upon the United Nations to re-evaluate its activities during the two years when it was in charge of the Timor-Leste Government, in order to identify the weak points that made the flare-up of violence possible. We call upon the United Nations to ensure that all information about Timor-Leste is transparent and accessible to civil society, so that there is a balance between the information available to the Government and the information available to the population. The United Nations must set up formal mechanisms for consultation that will enable women and young people of both sexes to be heard. They need the support of women's organizations and women journalists in carrying out activities, disseminating information, to build peace and reform communities.

The President. On behalf of the Council, I again thank the two speakers from civil society.

Mr. Gayama (Congo) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is grateful to you, Mr. President, for having taken the welcome initiative of organizing this public discussion on the topic of women, peace and security, which coincides with the commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on this issue.

First of all, let me express the full gratitude of my delegation to the Secretariat for the quality and clarity of the report submitted to us after only eight months of the initial implementation and integration of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security. We also welcome the quality and depth of the analysis given us this morning by Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), Ms. Carolyn McAskie, Assistant Secretary-General, Peacebuilding Support Office, and by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

My delegation generally welcomes the efforts made by the various entities in the United Nations and in Member States that have sought to implement the resolution and the Plan of Action. Resolution 1325 (2000) was historic, since it was the first Security Council resolution to deal exclusively with the issue of women in the context of international peace and security. It was the outcome of years of sustained efforts by non-governmental organizations, Governments and the United Nations. It defined a complete programme for women, peace and security, by emphasizing, *inter alia*, the need for full and equal participation of women in peacebuilding processes and activities and in gender-specific training for staff participating in peacekeeping operations. The resolution also recognizes that armed conflicts affect women disproportionately and in a special way. It rightly encourages Member States to give all peacekeeping operations personnel special training on male-female relations and ensure adequate representation for women in all decision-making.

Women are, in most cases, excluded from peace negotiations, in spite of the basic role they play in the prevention of conflicts and in peacebuilding within their communities. The number of women taking part in official negotiations remains limited. Parties to the conflict are, by and large, men, and it is men who, as warriors, sit down around the negotiation table in order to deal with matters that are considered by some to be too serious to be entrusted to peacemakers.

So much the better, we might say, if the image of women were not linked with that of the heroes of the bloodthirsty tales of yore that are so typical of banal machismo, and so much the better if women, in and of

themselves, only promoted life and were totally foreign to barbaric warfare. But, without claiming that all women are angels, we still need to establish in the role and place of women in society what relationship they have to peace and security, since no one, neither men nor women, is spared the impact of our common misadventures. Every country and region throughout the world has, if not a full-blown chronicle, at least a hint of such an experience.

The work of the United Nations in this area will only be enhanced if it is coordinated with that carried out by States. By basing its thinking on the Beijing Plan of Action and resolution 1325 (2000), Congo has endeavoured to include a gender-specific approach in all sectors of public life. As a result, Congolese women are involved in the process for the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region. They are playing an active role in the work of thematic groups and in meetings of the regional preparatory committee. They recently played a dynamic role in a meeting of women from the Great Lakes region regarding peace and security. That gathering took place from 6 to 8 February 2006 at Kinshasa and concluded with the adoption of a declaration.

Aware of what is at stake with regard to women's participation in the decision-making process, the Government, working through the department responsible for promoting the status of women and in cooperation with its development partners and civil society, has developed strategies to encourage the participation of Congolese women in the forthcoming elections.

Having been the theatre of successive civil wars from 1993 to 2002, my country fully understands the great price paid by women and young girls in conflict situations. Accordingly, my Government recognizes the need for the full participation of women at every stage of the peace process, in particular in the negotiation and implementation of agreements. Similarly, we are considering measures to protect this vulnerable sector of society from all sorts of violence, especially sexual violence.

Rape continues to take place today in such tragedies as the one taking place in Darfur. Rape continues to serve as a brutal weapon in warfare against women and children, whether in Africa or elsewhere. What we have seen occur in recent years in

Rwanda, Liberia, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan and Kosovo clearly points to the multidimensional nature of the victimization of women, who face war and systematic violence as a result of various ideologies. The result is physical, psychological, emotional and social injury that gradually erodes cultural values and social relations, thereby damaging the cohesion and stability of local communities.

It is for that reason that my delegation took note with great interest of the fact that the report (S/2006/770) of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security takes into account gender-specific issues in the major operational areas of action of the Plan, including conflict prevention and early warning, the restoration and consolidation of peace, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian efforts, post-conflict recovery, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, the prevention and prosecution of sexual violence in armed conflict and the prevention and punishment of exploitation and sexual abuse committed by personnel. The inclusion of gender-specific policies in all those areas should make it possible for us to have statistics broken down by sex, which could give us a clearer idea of existing gaps. That should, in turn, promote the implementation of appropriate solutions while taking into account the specific situation of women as regards peace and security.

However, despite the encouraging results outlined in the report of the Secretary-General, there are still many gaps in the implementation of the Action Plan, both within the United Nations and at the level of Member States. In that regard, while my delegation endorses the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General aimed at speeding up the implementation of both the Action Plan and resolution 1325 (2000), we are still concerned about contradictory trends towards centralization or decentralization of the mechanisms to manage gender policy and gender equality within the United Nations itself. My delegation believes that this issue merits further consideration, with a view to achieving balance, coherence and effectiveness in the area of peace and security.

Pending the issuance of the report of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment, my delegation believes that the

new cycle for results-based planning constitutes an interesting approach. Nevertheless, we reserve the right to make further comments in due course following the conclusions reached through that important undertaking.

With regard to financing, we should also consider the best ways to adapt resources to priorities. Only flexible, predictable and diligent financing that is based on real needs will make it possible to achieve objectives on the ground. My delegation would therefore like to take this opportunity to appeal to the entire international community to make further efforts to fund activities focused on women, peace and security.

We also approve of the establishment of ethics and discipline teams in peacekeeping operations. We reiterate our support for the zero-tolerance policy in place to address sexual abuse by staff in peacekeeping missions.

Although the progress made has not met our expectations, my delegation believes that more significant progress in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is not beyond our grasp. That can only be possible, however, through a collective response adapted to real needs. In that regard, my delegation supports the draft presidential statement on women and peace and security proposed by the delegation of Japan for adoption at the conclusion of this meeting.

In conclusion, I should not like to end without referring to the comprehensive dimension of gender issues, which in many respects are part of current concerns about the role of civil society in making proposals and as regards accountability. Gender concerns are among those issues that are often referred to as cross-cutting, as they transcend a number of institutional and thematic borders. If not carefully considered, the manner in which they are dealt with may give rise to adverse results. Examples include praiseworthy efforts at affirmative action that sometimes lead to genuine ghettoization, and action to advance the social standing of the so-called disadvantaged that is used as a convenient excuse to ease the conscience.

It is therefore up to politicians, institutions and actors in society to constantly try to eliminate all ambiguities as to the need to make gender first and foremost a human rights problem. In so doing, we could establish objective links — free of any

condescension or discrimination — between development, combating poverty, accountability and reducing all types of marginalization, as components conducive to promoting the voices and participation of women in society.

There is no doubt that women continue to be burdened by their geographical and cultural environment and the legacy of history. In that regard, human beings can only be defined in their complexity and diversity. What is important is to allow the full potential of that diversity to manifest itself as appropriately as possible in an effort to mobilize the resources, skills and motivation that today's world needs to lend an ever-more humane character to our efforts to address our common challenges.

Ms. Phee (United States of America): The United States would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your selection of this topic for your presidency's thematic discussion. The debate on resolution 1325 (2000) has become an important annual event precisely because it is considered to embrace such a wide range of significant concerns and issues related to the Security Council's responsibility for international peace and security.

As pointed out by the first four speakers this morning, the United Nations must act — and, indeed, in many instances has acted — to acknowledge and strengthen the role of women in peace processes and in post-conflict peacebuilding. Women can, and should, be involved in both making peace and maintaining security following conflict, not only in the sense of patrolling streets, but also as builders of consensus and leaders of reconciliation in post-conflict settings.

Women continue to take on greater roles as agents of change throughout all our societies. That dynamic is a healthy trend that all nations should support and foster. Yet, all too often, women have been largely excluded from formal efforts to develop and implement fresh solutions to seemingly intractable conflicts and their aftermath. Their involvement in those processes to prevent conflict and stop war is essential, and the United States takes seriously the challenge of bringing women, as equals of men, into the mainstream of decision-making and negotiation.

Allow me to cite some examples in which women's involvement in the peace process has had an immediate and lasting impact. One example comes from Sierra Leone, where the Government included the

participation of four women in a team of nine in peace talks that led to the development of the Lomé Peace Agreement of 1999. In Liberia, a group called the Mano River Women's Peace Network won the United Nations Prize in the Field of Human Rights in 2003, due to its involvement and positive influence in both conflict resolution and peacebuilding in that country. The group, comprised of women from Liberia and neighbouring Guinea and Sierra Leone, directly participated in the formal peace talks.

Another African example comes from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where horrendous numbers of women and girls were raped, abducted and physically abused as part of that conflict. Women's groups there played a critical role in shining a light on those abhorrent acts and in combating the stigma faced by the victims. Today, those groups continue an active campaign to mobilize the Government into holding accountable those responsible for crimes against women. I would also note that women are playing a vital and important role in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's democratic transition.

One last example involves Nepal. Women's groups in that country were not only active in pushing for peace, but were instrumental in securing a guarantee of equal rights for women and men in the country's new constitution. That achievement is especially significant given the degree to which women were involved in the conflict, both as combatants and as victims.

Despite those successful examples of and by women to increase and strengthen their role in peacemaking, there remains resistance to the notion that women can make a difference. The exclusion of women from important decision-making and political and social leadership roles is a deeply ingrained tradition in many societies. Changes to that counterproductive tradition will require a conscious, deliberate effort by us all.

In the past, women's traditional roles in society have often been used as an excuse for their exclusion from decision-making and leadership, but the unique roles and perspectives of women are essential to both formal and informal peace processes, especially in addressing entrenched cultures of violence. Because women frequently outnumber men after a conflict — such as in the case of the southern Sudan today, where the ratio of women to men is two to one — they will

have a particularly critical role to play in the implementation of any peace agreement and in building the institutions that will maintain the peace.

Experience increasingly demonstrates that incorporating the efforts of women peacebuilders builds more effective programmes. Their inclusion will advance their rights and lay the groundwork for a more sustainable peace. Therefore, women have not only the right, but the responsibility to be an integral part of all stages of the peace process and the consolidation of peace.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands.

Mr. Majoor (Netherlands): I would like to fully align myself with the statements made by the representative of Finland on behalf of the European Union and the representative of Slovenia on behalf of the Human Security Network.

Like others, I also would like to extend my thanks to you, Sir, for marking the sixth anniversary of the adoption by the Council of resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security by holding an open debate on the role of women in the consolidation of peace. This subject deserves our full attention and, even more important, concrete action.

If we are really serious about promoting peace and security, we cannot afford to miss a single opportunity to promote women's rights and increase women's participation in peace processes, and it is crucially important at this point in time that women's rights organizations, such as those whose representatives spoke before me, are speaking out. They are calling on their leaders and on us, the international community, to fully include them in the peace processes.

War and conflict affect women, men, girls and boys in different ways. Shocking reports about the widespread occurrence of gender-based violence are almost daily news. In many resolutions and meetings, we condemn this kind of violence, yet it remains increasingly used as an instrument to terrorize civilian populations.

We must turn the tide and take action now. Gender-based violence is not an inevitable consequence of war and conflict. Resolution 1325 (2000) highlighted the importance of women's protection needs, and several United Nations agencies,

such as the United Nations Development Programme, are active in reforming the security and justice sectors to ensure that those institutions are responsive to those needs. In that regard, I also should mention the adoption of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court as a groundbreaking development in the criminalization of sexual and gender-based violence.

What steps has the Netherlands taken to transform resolution 1325 (2000) into action? First, we have established an inter-ministerial task force on women in situations of conflict and peacekeeping to ensure an integrated approach towards the issue. The Ministries of Social Affairs and Employment, Defence, the Interior and Foreign Affairs have brought relevant actors together and raised awareness in support of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). As a result, the Ministry of Defence has set up a gender force to ensure that a gender perspective is embedded in the planning and implementation of peace support operations.

In addition, the Netherlands supports both national and international non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies in advancing the involvement of women in maintaining and promoting sustainable peace. Since 1997, the Government of the Netherlands has, for example, provided support for efforts to ensure the effective involvement of Sudanese women in the peace processes in the Sudan.

As a follow up to resolution 1325 (2000), the Netherlands, together with other partners, has provided the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) with funds for gender expertise to integrate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations. In the course of this year, together with Norway and the United Kingdom, we undertook a joint donor review of DPKO's implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Our joint findings in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Liberia were presented to Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno this week. They include numerous good practices, as well as lessons learned and remaining gaps and challenges. The overall conclusion was that significant progress towards the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) has been made and that the gender advisers are doing an excellent job. However, commitment and accountability are still limited, especially at the senior and middle-management levels. The Netherlands

welcomes the initiative of Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno to issue a clear policy directive to his staff in that regard.

Another challenge is coordination between the security, humanitarian and development pillars on the ground, which is often insufficient, sometimes resulting in overlap in work. Moreover, gender is still not always considered to be an integrated and essential cross-cutting issue in peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. Those gaps need to be addressed by DPKO, which is in the lead; by the Peacebuilding Commission, which will have to play an important role in that respect; by the United Nations country teams on the ground; and by us all in order to guarantee successful implementation. The overall availability of adequate financial and human resources is key to more sustainable progress and success in the future.

In conclusion, I would like to underline the continued crucial role of the Security Council, including the need for it systematically to integrate resolution 1325 (2000) into its work. It starts by including the gender perspective and a specific, explicit reference to resolution 1325 (2000) in all its resolutions that establish or extend mandates for peacekeeping missions and monitoring their implementation in its subsequent work.

The President: I call on the representative of Iceland.

Mr. Hannesson (Iceland): Iceland, as a member of the European Economic Area, but not a member of the European Union, aligns itself with the statement made earlier by Minister Elisabeth Rehn of Finland on behalf of the European Union. I would like, in addition, to make a few remarks.

I wish first to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this open debate and giving us the opportunity to discuss Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) concerning women, peace and security. Our thanks also go to the four briefers.

At the outset, my Government would like to express its gratitude to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on women, peace and security, contained in document S/2006/770.

Resolution 1325 (2000) has put gender issues on the agenda of the Council. The resolution has proved to be an important tool in promoting the direct involvement of women in conflict prevention,

peacekeeping and peacebuilding. It is now finally recognized that women have a crucial role to play in peace processes and in achieving sustainable peace in conflict regions.

Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), considerable attention has been paid to its implementation at the United Nations level. Last year we welcomed the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), as an instrument for mainstreaming a gender perspective throughout the work of this Organization dealing with peace and security. In order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, a gender perspective must be integrated into all strategies and programmes.

The report of the Secretary-General indicates that some progress has been made in the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan, in particular in areas such as peacekeeping and peacemaking. Nonetheless, much more must be done at the United Nations level, both at Headquarters and in the field. We would like to underline the important role of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office in the promotion of the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We fully share the opinion of the Secretary-General that gender equality should be recognized as a core issue in the maintenance of peace and security.

We must ensure that the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) are realized and that women can fully and equally participate in all levels of decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Women must be full agents in the shaping and rebuilding of their communities in the aftermath of war. It is our duty to continue our work towards the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) at the national, regional and international levels.

Iceland is fully committed to implementing resolution 1325 (2000). That includes promoting the rights of women and girls and mainstreaming gender concerns in the United Nations system and in our foreign policy. In Iceland's Policy on Development Cooperation 2005-2009, special emphasis is placed on the importance of issues related to women in conflict areas. Much of Iceland's development cooperation is directed towards facilitating a smooth transition from conflict situations, with special emphasis on women and their role in peacebuilding.

Mrs. Valgerdur Sverrisdottir, Iceland's Minister for Foreign Affairs, has recently reinforced Iceland's commitment to gender mainstreaming by focusing the work of the Iceland Crisis Response Unit on certain main themes for the selection of projects and peacekeeping operations in the civil spectrum. The aim is to ensure that the overall selection of projects and assignments gives opportunities to women as well as to men.

In that context, Iceland attaches much importance to the valuable work of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in advancing gender equality and women's rights. Iceland has increased its support for the work of UNIFEM more than tenfold in the past two years, and we will increase our support even further. The Icelandic Crisis Response Unit has in recent years seconded a gender expert to UNIFEM in Kosovo. The main objective of the programme is to increase the awareness and obligations of the public administration in the area of women's rights and other women's issues on the basis of United Nations resolutions. The project has now been expanded to six other countries in the Balkan peninsula.

Once again, let me thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this important meeting, and we look forward to further discussions on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Uganda.

Mr. Butagira (Uganda): Mr. President, let me join other speakers in thanking you for having convened this important debate.

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) was a landmark resolution on women, peace and security. Yet, sadly, not much has been done to implement it, in particular in terms of elaborating reporting and monitoring mechanisms.

Women have suffered a great deal in armed conflict. They have been victims of rape and related violence. They have even suffered at the hands of some peacekeepers, who, ironically, were supposed to be protecting them. Very often they also find themselves the sole breadwinners if their husbands have left to fight or have died in the fighting. Yet their role in conflict resolution is minimal, if not non-existent. It is therefore important to mainstream a gender perspective

in the work of institutions such as the recently created Peacebuilding Commission. The role of women also should be emphasized in peacekeeping missions.

The question also arises of involving women, to the extent possible, in peace negotiations. Usually it is up to the parties to the conflict to constitute their delegations. We can only say that it is advisable that they include women in their delegations. If they are not direct participants, they can certainly be observers. My delegation calls on the Security Council and the Secretary-General to take steps to realize this proposal.

Staffing positions in relevant institutions dealing with peacekeeping and peacebuilding should also incorporate a gender perspective. This is not necessarily to say that there should be affirmative action, but I believe that there is a pool of women well qualified to be considered on their merits.

I would like now to touch on the issue of gender-based violence against women and the issue of impunity. There should be zero tolerance for impunity. In that regard, I would draw the attention of the Council to the atrocities committed against women by the so-called Lord's Resistance Army in northern Uganda. Uganda is a partner with the International Criminal Court (ICC) in making sure that the perpetrators of those crimes are made to answer for their heinous actions.

But all are also aware that there are ongoing peace talks in Juba, in southern Sudan, between the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army, aimed at finding a peaceful solution to the long-running conflict. Despite some obstacles, progress has been made, and the Ugandan Government is determined that the talks will succeed. In the event of a comprehensive agreement being reached, the Government of Uganda has offered amnesty to the indicted leaders of the Lord's Resistance Army. We have to balance the need for justice with the imperatives of peace and stability in northern Uganda. I must make it clear, though, that we are not condoning impunity. There are traditional ways of punishing perpetrators, while at the same time achieving justice and reconciliation, including the provision of reparations to the victims.

The Government of Uganda has appointed a team of lawyers to study this Acholi tradition and to make sure no impunity is condoned. The Government will make sure that the traditional system is consistent with

international standards for dealing with impunity. In this direction, we are walking in step with the International Criminal Court.

Mrs. Papadopolou (Greece): Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for having taken the initiative to organize this debate pursuant to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), focusing in particular on the roles of women in the consolidation of peace.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his Report on women, peace and security (S/2006/770), which accurately depicts the progress achieved so far in the context of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Greece fully aligns itself with the statement that was made this morning by the representative of Finland on behalf of the European Union. We also endorse the statement made by the representative of Slovenia on behalf of the Human Security Network.

Today's meeting offers us the opportunity to share some thoughts regarding the role of women in peace and security. It is indeed encouraging that since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) public awareness has considerably risen and public opinion has become more sensitive regarding the position of women in armed conflict and their positive role in the consolidation of a peaceful environment in post-conflict situations. Special tribute should be paid to civil society both for its contribution to the advancement of the status of women and for its recognition of the role that women can play in promoting peace, which has been acknowledged ever since the First World Conference on Women in 1975.

Unfortunately, this positive trend has not been coupled with the termination of violence against women in conflict situations. The Security Council's adoption this year of resolution 1674 (2006), on the protection of civilians, is yet another milestone in the protection of women in armed conflict. That resolution condemns in the strongest terms all acts of violence or abuses committed against civilians, including gender-based and sexual violence, and recognizes that flagrant and widespread violations of international humanitarian and human rights law may constitute a threat to international peace and security. We hope that this step, along with the relevant provisions of international humanitarian and international human rights law, will help put an end to tolerance of violence

against civilians, including women, as well as to impunity.

Let us recall that the things we agreed upon during the 2005 World Summit — development, peace, security and human rights, the pillars of the United Nations system and the foundations for collective security and well-being — are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Women have an important role to play in each and every stage, from conflict prevention to post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization.

Strengthening the rule of law and, within that, protecting the full enjoyment of human rights by women and advancing gender equality are significant aspects of conflict prevention. The incorporation of the gender dimension in early warning activities and the actual use of that factor, both as an indicator contributing to a more comprehensive assessment of emerging conflicts and as an incentive to the timely planning of gender-sensitive programmes, are certainly very positive steps. We therefore very much welcome the participation of women in early warning and conflict prevention work.

In peacekeeping, the incorporation of the gender perspective from the early phases of planning and its mainstreaming into mission mandates is of equal importance. Training of personnel, be it humanitarian, civilian or military, is necessary for increasing awareness and above all, for ensuring compliance with the appropriate standards of behaviour and conduct. I believe we can all agree that the best way to make sure that these aims are met is to actively involve women themselves. The goal of the increased participation of women is provided for in many international legal instruments, such as the Charter of the United Nations, resolution 1325 (2000) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). With a view to honouring that commitment, Greece has ratified both CEDAW and its Optional Protocol, and has established an office of gender equality in the Ministry of National Defence.

Regarding peacebuilding, I cannot fail to make a special reference to the Peacebuilding Commission and the discussion organized yesterday by the United Kingdom in the form of an Arria-style meeting. Peacebuilding is a broad notion, encompassing, inter alia, the restoration of the rule of law, the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration process and security-sector reform. Yesterday's Arria-style

meeting gave us the opportunity to stress the importance of taking into account the gender perspective in all those areas. But most of all, the process of peace building cannot but be tightly linked to sustainable development and the creation of a viable economic environment.

There can be no sustainable peace and security without development, and the empowerment of women is key to all development efforts and their prospects for success. That was duly recognized in the Millennium Declaration, the promotion of gender equality being a Millennium Development Goal in itself — and rightly so, because discrimination against women seriously impedes the eradication of poverty and the combating of contagious diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Limited access to primary education and non-equitable access to employment power the vicious circle of poverty and discrimination.

One cannot but stress the importance of incorporating the gender perspective in development policies, including poverty-reduction strategies. Taking this fully into account, Greece finances development projects fostering gender equality, promoting maternal and reproductive health and focusing on combating human trafficking, especially of women and girls.

I will conclude my intervention by making a reference to the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Mr. Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh, with his famous microfinance banking system, has chosen to give loans primarily to women living in poor areas for the establishment of small enterprises. That initiative has created a remarkably solid basis for economic development, demonstrating the crucial role that women can play in this respect and thus in consolidating peace.

Mr. Manongi (United Republic of Tanzania): We too thank the delegation of Japan for organizing this important debate on women and peace and security. In our view it is important for the Security Council to continue examining how resolution 1325 (2000) can best be implemented. We are therefore grateful for the insightful introductions this morning by Ms. Mayanja, Mr. Guéhenno, Ms. Heyzer and Ms. McAskie, as well as those by the representatives of civil society this afternoon. We wish to associate ourselves with the statement to be made later by the Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Lesotho on behalf of

the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

We welcome the report of the Secretary-General (S/2006/770) on the review of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). We are encouraged by the progress made in the implementation of the Action Plan. The challenge is to sustain the momentum and progress achieved while striving to overcome the gaps and challenges in the implementation of the Action Plan. In this regard, we support the Secretary-General's recommendation that the Action Plan be renewed beyond 2007. The wealth of knowledge, information and good practices that have been gathered in the implementation process needs to be widely shared.

While there is a wide consensus on the positive contributions that women bring to peacebuilding and to consultations on peace, their effective participation cannot happen without aid, for the magnitude of the challenges we face remains great. In the name of tradition, culture or even security, women have continued to be excluded from decision-making with respect to conflicts. Too often they have been set aside while men brokered peace agreements. Thankfully, more and more women are challenging this viewpoint and are increasingly demanding involvement as stakeholders in their communities. Their potential as peacebuilders must be harnessed.

Concerted efforts are required to support and strengthen the capacities of women and their networks so that they can participate in all processes of peacebuilding and peace consolidation. In this regard, we commend the efforts that have been undertaken by various stakeholders, in particular those in the United Nations system and civil society and various national political leaders, in promoting the participation of women in peacebuilding and peace consolidation processes.

While we are encouraged by the increased participation of women in countries emerging from conflict, we are still concerned with the low representation of women across all areas and levels of decision-making processes. Affirmative action is a strategy that ought to be considered in areas that have significantly low representation. This is an important measure in all societies that have to address existing gaps.

In addition to addressing this shortcoming, women in conflict and post-conflict situations also need support to ensure that their voices can articulate issues of their concern and that they are heard and taken into account. In this regard, gender equality advocacy needs to be addressed consistently, not as a single event. Men and boys also have a role to play in the promotion of women's rights and gender equality, and we need to actively engage them as well.

The promotion of gender equality needs the commitment of the political leadership and needs institutions that are gender-sensitive. The creation and strengthening of national gender machinery in countries emerging from conflict need to be supported, so as to facilitate the implementation and monitoring of the various gender-equality and women's advancement instruments, including resolution 1325 (2000).

We note with concern persistent violations of women's rights and, in particular, gender-based sexual violence perpetrated against women in conflict and post-conflict situations. We strongly condemn all such violations. The perpetrators of these violations need to be prosecuted, and redress must be made to women who have faced such horrific acts.

In addition to protection from gender-based and sexual violence, women need justice in many other arenas, such as access to and control of productive resources, for example, land. The economic empowerment of women is necessary if we are to protect women and children from their vulnerability to sexual violence and abuse, exploitation and HIV/AIDS infection. In this regard, the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in judicial reform and the security sector needs to be supported as a priority issue.

While strongly condemning all acts of sexual violence, it is encouraging to observe how the Secretariat, especially the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, is confronting unlawful practices in peacekeeping missions. We support measures undertaken by the Secretary-General to curb these shameful crimes. We urge all troop-contributing countries to ensure that personnel are well informed and properly trained to prevent the commission of such offences. Furthermore, all acts of violations should be investigated and the culprits brought to justice.

We are encouraged by the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission. The Commission, given adequate resources, has a significant role to play in

addressing gender equality in all spheres, and in particular during the process of developing country strategies for peace consolidation. The Peacebuilding Commission and its Support Office will, however, require capacity-building and support in its endeavours to mainstream a gender perspective. In this regard, we would encourage that a gender expert be included in the Support Office.

Resolution 1325 (2000) makes it clear that we can no longer afford to neglect the abuses to which women and girls are subjected during armed conflicts and in their aftermath; nor can we ignore women's contributions in the search for peace. We have a responsibility to support the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) as a way of harnessing women's contributions to peacebuilding, to our communities and to our countries.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Japan.

Six years after the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), it is again time to take stock of the progress made and renew our commitment to move towards achieving the goals set out in this important resolution.

The consolidation of peace encompasses an endeavour and a process that require a comprehensive approach, involving all stakeholders and sustained international support, including that of the United Nations. Women play critical roles in such endeavours and processes, and landmark resolution 1325 (2000) has contributed significantly to enhancing women's ability to fully commit themselves to rebuilding their communities, ensuring sustainable peace and preventing the recurrence of conflict. This has been and continues to be an essential pillar in the consolidation of peace.

I take this opportunity to commend all the efforts made by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, by the United Nations Development Fund for Women and by all other development, humanitarian, human rights and advocacy agencies, organizations and groups, both inside and outside the United Nations system, for promoting the goals set out in resolution 1325 (2000), while fully admitting that there still remains a lot that needs to be done.

We welcome the fact that, in the Peacebuilding Commission, which is focusing on Sierra Leone and Burundi, the importance of integrating gender perspectives into peacebuilding activities is specifically and emphatically noted. We expect that the outcome of today's debate, along with useful suggestions that have been made, will be reflected appropriately in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission so as to further assist in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

In our view, the debate on the role of women and peace and security and the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) should inform and be informed by the concept of human security and the people-centred approach that it advocates. Promoting the empowerment of each individual and protecting individuals from threats to their safety and basic well-being is the ultimate goal of human security. Implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) should contribute to enhancing human security for women. It should also promote institutional reforms that integrate the needs and priorities of women so as to strengthen their empowerment and protection.

As part of its efforts to promote human security in practice on the ground, Japan helped set up the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security in 1999. During the past few years, the Trust Fund has supported over 160 projects in more than 90 countries and regions, and many of them have contributed towards the empowerment and protection of women and children. With this end in mind, many of the projects approved under the Trust Fund are implemented in partnership with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups active in this field. One example is that of a local NGO, Dushirehamwe, in Burundi, coordinated by Ms. Christine Miturumbwe, who delivered a statement here today. Among other activities, Dushirehamwe is implementing a project that aims to help returnees and internally displaced women to improve their economic capacities, thereby facilitating communal reconciliation and coexistence between the local population and the returnees and internally displaced persons.

Women's participation has enormous significance in ensuring the consolidation of peace and community reconstruction. Resolution 1325 (2000) provides the necessary framework, and it needs to be implemented with all the vigour and support it deserves, and Japan

intends to continue to do its utmost to contribute to that end.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

At this juncture, I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Comoros, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda.

In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Aboud (Comoros) took a seat at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia.

Mrs. Blum (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, upon your management of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We are pleased that Japan has decided to convene this open debate a few days before 31 October — the sixth anniversary of the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security.

We thank Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, for her presentation of the report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security. The report notes the progress in the application of the System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) throughout the entire United Nations system, and the difficulties that were encountered, including those relative to the analysis of gender problems and the incorporation of a gender perspective within the Organization. The commitment to agree on and coordinate action within the United Nations system and among Member States is essential to achieving the goals of resolution 1325 (2000).

Resolution 1325 (2000) has the firm support of Colombia, one of the countries that promoted it and as a member of the group of friends that drives its

implementation and dissemination. Colombia presented a report to the Secretary-General in 2004 on the progress made in its implementation.

Aware that the main responsibility in the implementation of the resolution falls on Member States, Colombia has moved ahead with its implementation in legislation and through special programmes that have the cooperation and support of the United Nations system. The United Nations Development Fund for Women has been an important ally since Colombia's peace and security programme was created in 2003. Colombia has also adopted laws to protect women and promote their participation. Colombia's legislation favours female-headed households and guarantees that women will fill 30 per cent of public posts at decision-making levels in the different branches and organs of public administration. The legislation has had an incremental effect on their participation.

The dissemination and promotion of resolution 1325 (2000) has been a constant priority in the coordinated work of the Presidential Advisory Office on the Equality of Women, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

My country actively participated in the first training course on gender, conflict and peacebuilding in the Andean region, which was held in Lima in October 2005, under the auspices of Women Waging Peace. One month later, a similar event was held in Bogotá, with the wide participation of the public sector and representatives of civil society and academia in order to promote resolution 1325 (2000) and highlight elements that can incorporate the gender perspective into peacebuilding programmes, policies and actions.

The democratic security policy applied in Colombia is based on a comprehensive vision that involves not only the security aspect, but also components of social equity and human development. Within that framework, Colombia has a social reform policy that works towards, among other objectives, greater gender equality.

We deploy seven tools to that end: educational revolution, social protection, the promotion of economic solidarity, the social management of rural areas and public services, the democratization of property possession, and a guaranteed quality of life in urban areas. Each of those mechanisms includes a follow-up mechanism.

As the result of legislation adopted by Congress, the Presidential Advisory Office for the Equality of Women created the post of observer on gender issues that is responsible for incorporating the gender perspective in the analysis of the results achieved in the aforementioned areas.

In order to implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), our National Development Plan, set out in the chapter on social equity, is mandated to carry out policies in favour of women pursuant to cross-cutting gender criteria coordinated by the Presidential Advisory Office for the Equality of Women. The Advisory Office — the guiding entity for governmental policies in that field — has outlined a policy on women as peacebuilders and promoters of development. That is the starting point from which to articulate objectives, strategies and actions aimed at the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

The Advisory Office also promoted a national agreement on equality between men and women. That agreement has special significance to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) as it not only advances the incorporation of a gender perspective into public policy, but also strengthens the participation of women based on conditions equal to those of men in all areas of society.

The Government of Colombia is firmly committed to the achievement of the goals of women, the promotion and protection of their rights, and the advancement of their full participation in public life. One of the goals for the period 2006-2010 is the inclusion of a gender perspective in the foreign policy and international cooperation agenda, with an emphasis on social development issues.

Since 2002, my Government, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Presidential Advisory Office for the Equality of Women, has coordinated efforts to implement resolution 1325 (2000). One of those initiatives was the creation of a framework on women, peace and security that ultimately adopted a common agenda on the issue of women and their incorporation into priority actions for peace in Colombia.

I would like to stress that, for the Government of Colombia, building and maintaining peace should not be limited to reaching peace accords with illegal armed groups. The Government has always kept in mind the need to maintain and strengthen peace through social,

economic and political reforms in order to achieve greater rates of economic growth and employment, and thus to greater access to, and opportunities for education, health and social security. We are convinced that this is the only way to build societies that are more just and democratic and to give women the place they deserve within the framework of development and social equality.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Guatemala.

Mrs. Briz Gutiérrez (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to begin by thanking you, Sir, for convening this dialogue and the representatives of the Secretariat for the interesting and inspiring briefings we have heard this morning. They have set the tone for today's discussion.

Since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), Guatemala has supported Council members' efforts to ensure its ongoing and comprehensive implementation. We have seen the growing interest throughout the world in the situation of women and girl children in armed conflict. We have strenuously condemned the persistence of gender-based violence in conflict situations, as well as sexual exploitation, violence in general and abuse.

We have also stressed the need to put an end to the impunity of the perpetrators so as to bring peace, justice and genuine reconciliation to conflict areas, thereby ensuring that the social fabric of communities does not deteriorate further and in order to construct a lasting and robust peace.

Guatemala suffered more than three decades of armed conflict, and during the negotiations on Guatemala's peace agreements signed in 1996, an entire section specifically referring to the importance of the role of women in maintaining peace, in particular indigenous women, was incorporated. There is also an entire section on the importance of women's participation in strengthening the impact of civil society. In that connection, we share Ms. McAskie's vision of the catalytic role and comparative advantages that the Peacebuilding Commission can have in that respect in situations on the ground.

We also thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2006/770), which discussed frankly and comprehensively the shortcomings in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), thus making

it possible to adopt the collective measures needed to correct them. At the same time, it pointed out the opportunities that the Action Plan offers for the resolution's implementation and recognized the progress made so far.

We wish to highlight the work accomplished by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women in implementing resolution 1325 (2000) and the Action Plan. We thank the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women for preparing the guide for national action planning entitled "Securing Equality, Engendering Peace", which will undoubtedly assist in national capacity-building with a gender perspective.

We wish to express our gratitude to all of the system's agencies and funds that have worked to ensure women's participation at all stages of peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes — particularly the United Nations Development Fund for Women, which has been promoting the participation of Guatemalan women in electoral processes and in leadership training in communities and local governments since 1997. We also thank the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which has contributed to the effort to increase women's participation in Guatemalan contingents on United Nations missions.

As we say in my country, there is a wide gap between words and deeds. The objective of gender equality is still far from being attained, despite the fact that it is established in the Charter, reiterated in various instruments of international law and emphasized in resolution 1325 (2000). It is regrettable that, as the report reveals, six years after the adoption of the Security Council resolution and 61 years after the establishment of the United Nations, only 26.07 per cent of the Council's resolutions include language relating to women or gender. That shows us that our level of compliance with the commitments undertaken in the area of women's advancement still falls well below expectations. More support is needed in this area, where it is most lacking.

In Guatemala, we understand very well the importance of women's participation in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes in their communities of origin. A gender perspective must be systematically incorporated into all the multifaceted efforts of Member States and of the United Nations and should become a primary component of their policies,

programmes and activities. But, above all, it must be a central theme in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Guatemala's army has included women since it resumed its participation in peacekeeping operations. Currently, out of the 85 Guatemalan personnel deployed in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, seven are women. For the first time in our history, a woman lieutenant has been appointed to command an operations unit. There are also seven women among the 114 Guatemalan soldiers deployed in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

For all those reasons, our delegation agrees with the measures recommended by the Secretary-General in his report, particularly the establishment of an effective accountability, monitoring and reporting system for a new cycle of the Action Plan, which will be renewed in 2007. We hope that it will cover the entire system. We agree that the renewal should be prepared in accordance with the conclusions and measures set out in the report. In particular, we support the Action Plan's renewal to make it a tool for results-based programming, monitoring and reporting.

We also believe that heads of units, special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General should be held responsible for mainstreaming a gender perspective into policies and programmes. Moreover, we should strengthen capacity for full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), improve coordination of the system, particularly on the ground, and provide incentives for the participation of all interested sectors of civil society.

Not to involve women and girls at all levels of capacity-building in the area of peacebuilding would be to make them the most vulnerable group, shown no mercy by the enemies of peaceful coexistence.

The President: I now call upon the representative of Indonesia.

Mrs. Asmady (Indonesia): My delegation thanks you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting and the Secretary-General for his timely report (S/2006/770) on the progress being made in putting into effect the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

The report presents us with a mixed picture of opportunities seized and opportunities missed. According to the report, the Plan is being implemented in a limited way by some specialized agencies. But, some challenges remain, such as inadequate understanding of gender analysis and mainstreaming, poor leadership and commitment with regard to the Plan's implementation, weak coordination and insufficient use of available expertise. To meet those challenges, there must be a general change in attitudes and perceptions regarding the importance of women as peacemakers and peacekeepers.

Even now, after much effort to make gender mainstreaming commonplace throughout the United Nations system, it remains true that not all United Nations agencies and bodies focus on or mention gender in their work. Nevertheless, the report provides the basis for some optimism about the future, especially in relation to women's role in the system's peacekeeping and peacemaking activities. But, much more needs to be done in that area.

However, what continues to be a matter of concern after eight months of the Plan's implementation is weak coordination, which can be included among the institutional gaps and challenges affecting the United Nations system. System-wide efforts to infuse gender into peace and security matters would greatly improve if overlapping and duplication were to be minimized. Agencies must be made aware of what their counterparts are doing and should not engage in the same activities. Remedying that situation will require better dissemination and sharing of information among United Nations bodies.

My delegation underlines the urgent need for further action to accelerate the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by the relevant United Nations entities, particularly in their efforts to continue their vigorous and multi-pronged engagement with Member States.

My delegation takes note of the measures adopted by various United Nations entities to implement the resolution at the national and community levels. However, it is essential that such endeavours be undertaken in full consultation with national authorities.

At the international level, the establishment of a working group or focal point on women, peace and security within the Security Council, in keeping with

the recommendations in the report, should also be given full consideration. But it would be equally beneficial if, as proposed in the report, the Council were to permit wider participation by the United Nations membership in its work. That would increase sensitivity regarding the issue of women's actual and potential contributions to peace and security and strengthen commitment in that regard.

Indonesia believes that the implementation of the Action Plan represents the first phase in achieving a well-coordinated, results-based, system-wide strategy. If it is to succeed, that strategy will require committed, sensitive leadership throughout the United Nations system, actively supported by women in decision-making positions, whose actions will help to consolidate peace. It would also be good protocol if the Council were to interact more closely with other major United Nations organs so as to enrich its insight in terms of taking action and to achieve better decision-making.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Bangladesh, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): I would be remiss if I did not begin by applauding the Japanese presidency for its effective stewardship of this forum. I would also like to thank you, Sir, for your initiative in having organized this open debate. It is on a subject dear to our hearts.

It has been six years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). This landmark resolution — one with which Bangladesh, as a member of the Council at the time, was closely associated — was based primarily on the simple thesis of equal access for and full participation of women at all levels of the power structure. The role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts has been an essential element in bringing about and sustaining peace and security. To this effect, the Bangladeshi presidency of the Security Council issued a statement on Women's Day in March 2000. Eventually, that statement culminated in the resolution. Needless to say, Bangladesh is deeply committed to its full and effective implementation.

Women suffer most as the victims of conflict. In peace processes they are mostly deprived of the dividends; their voices are not fully listened to — or even heard. Six years after resolution 1325 (2000), we need to reflect further on how best to advance its goal.

We need to analyse the challenges and how they can be overcome. We need to ensure the adequate representation of women at all levels of decision-making in conflict prevention. This must include early-warning mechanisms, both during hostilities and during post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Women's effective participation in peace negotiations is measured not in numbers but in terms of their decision-making power. It is undeniable that in the consolidation of peace the role of women remains vital.

We welcome the review of the System-wide Action Plan this year. We hope that we will succeed in overcoming its weaknesses through concerted efforts in the years to come. It is our hope that in integrating a gender perspective across the broad spectrum of the United Nations system, geographical, cultural and ethnic factors will be borne in mind. Adequate resources should also be mobilized to that effect. The active involvement of civil society and non-governmental organizations is a *sine qua non* in this respect.

Based on our national experience, we believe that gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women are categorical imperatives for development, as well as for social stability. Access to education and health care, combined with the provision of microcredit facilities, can unleash the entrepreneurial skills of women. Women's empowerment tends to marginalize extremist thought and action in the community. This addresses a root cause of violence and terror. The award of the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize to microcredit pioneer Professor Yunus of the Grameen Bank clearly demonstrates the linkage between poverty alleviation, women's empowerment and peace.

Bangladesh, despite many and varied constraints, has set an example in this domain. It stands ready to share best practices with others of comparable milieu.

The overall experience in implementing resolution 1325 (2000) at all levels of decision-making has been mixed. Sadly, violence against women continues to occur in war. That is also the case in times of peace. We have integrated gender perspectives into some aspects of United Nations peacekeeping operations. However, in post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, much remains to be done. As one of the largest troop-contributing countries to United Nations peacekeeping operations, Bangladesh is ever-conscious

of its responsibilities to incorporate essential elements of resolution 1325 (2000) in the pre-deployment training of peacekeepers.

As a member of the Peacebuilding Commission, we will remain vigilant in our focus on the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000). That was evident during deliberations on Sierra Leone and Burundi. We will also do our best to ensure that our exhortations to all United Nations agencies in this regard remain sustained.

We believe that the protection of women and girls from gender-based violence and abuse is a primary and enduring responsibility. There should be zero tolerance with respect to the perpetrators. We will brook no impunity in this regard. All would agree that that is truly a noble goal; indeed, a nobler goal would be hard to find.

The President: I thank the representative of Bangladesh for his kind words addressed to the presidency. I believe that it would also be appropriate here for me to express our congratulations to Bangladesh on the award to Mr. Muhammad Yunus of the Nobel Peace Prize.

I now call on the representative of Spain.

Mrs. Escobar (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain welcomes the initiative of the Japanese presidency to hold this open debate on the role of women in peacebuilding.

Spain aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Finland on behalf of the European Union.

The question of the role of women in peacebuilding is of great relevance, because in the transitional processes that follow conflict, the foundation of a democratic and equal society can be created — provided that the needs and priorities of women and men are considered throughout the process. Such efforts must be based on respect for human rights and must reflect an awareness of the differences and inequalities between the sexes, which can be exacerbated at the end of a conflict if women and girls are prevented from fully participating in and benefiting from reconstruction processes.

In that regard, a number of elements are required. There must be equal participation by men and women in efforts to maintain peace and security. A gender

perspective must be integrated into all aspects of peacebuilding, thereby guaranteeing that all the needs of women, girls, men and boys are placed on an equal footing in a systematic manner. Women and girls must be protected from sexual abuse and gender-based violence, and impunity must be ended. This means including women, who are usually relegated to a secondary role, in decision-making processes leading to the adoption of necessary institutional, judicial, political, educational and economic changes.

Promoting equality at all levels is more difficult when resources are lacking and when women's initiatives are marginalized. Plans of action are useful tools to that end and require efficient review mechanisms and, of course, funding, ideally from regular budgets. Women and children in the field can, with international assistance, obtain employment and realize not only their political rights but all of the rights to which they are entitled. The issue of reparations for victims has been the subject of in-depth consideration by the panel of experts established at the request of the Secretary-General, under the chairmanship of Prince Zeid Al-Hussein of Jordan, which has issued a very enlightening report. Spain is gratified to see that a new panel of experts has been formed with such a mandate.

The Security Council should consider the possibility of creating a focal point responsible for gender issues and other issues relating to the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The importance of the resolution must transcend the necessary and thought-provoking celebration of the anniversary on 31 October of the unanimous adoption of the resolution. Since 2000, only 39 of the Security Council's 261 resolutions or texts have contained any reference to gender issues. Only five of the 59 resolutions adopted in 2004 dealt with the issue of violence against women, and only eight made reference to resolution 1325 (2000).

Spain attaches great importance to the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). In 2004, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden and the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain jointly signed an article entitled "Women, peace and security", which, *inter alia*, deplored the lack of participation of women in peace processes.

In that same year, in the Security Council, Spain highlighted the importance of the Council's giving

serious consideration to the establishment of a permanent mechanism for the effective follow-up of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in the context of the various conflict situations that it deals with on an ongoing basis.

In another development, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) prepared a document containing the main guidelines of its gender policy, which include the requirements set out in resolution 1325 (2000). Spain, which will hold the chairmanship of the OSCE in 2007, intends to disseminate information about, and promote and organize events based on, the resolution, giving it the importance it deserves.

The most recent guiding plan for Spanish cooperation, for the period 2003-2008, attaches priority to items on conflict resolution as well as gender issues in development policies. The implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is a key objective for the Spanish Government. Spain, whose official development assistance in the area of gender-related issues has increased by 70 per cent in the past two years, is participating in projects aimed at safeguarding the human rights of women and children, particularly as regards the economic and political empowerment of women in conflict and post-conflict situations and in peacebuilding processes — in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Lebanon, Iraq, as well as in other areas of high priority for Spanish cooperation such as sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, in Mozambique.

Spain intends to support UNIFEM, with which it is already cooperating, in the context of ongoing projects in Liberia, whose Minister for Gender and Development participated in a panel this past Monday.

The International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), with Spanish cooperation funding, has in 2006 developed plans for the empowerment of women at the local and national levels in various reconstruction processes, particularly in Latin America.

In conclusion, the Spanish Government has established a group of experts, which includes the ministers concerned and independent experts from the academic world and civil society, whose goal is to draft a national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We expect the plan to be completed sometime next year.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Fiji.

Mr. Kau (Fiji): Mr. President, I should like to thank you and the members of the Council for the opportunity to speak on the subject of women, peace and security.

Fiji aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum.

We thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2006/770) on women, peace and security. The report has identified the gaps and opportunities presented by the System-wide Action Plan and accordingly provides for some remedies. We urge the Council to adopt its recommendations, and we also call on Member States to play their respective roles as necessary.

Fiji regards Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) as the international instrument guiding national policies and practices in all aspects of conflict prevention, peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction. More importantly, the resolution is the authority on gender dimensions and the role of women in these areas, in particular in peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We therefore support the call for the expeditious implementation of actions that would enhance and accelerate the implementation of the resolution, in particular by the United Nations system through the engagement of Member States and other actors.

All parts of the United Nations system must, in partnership with Member States, own and drive the process if the gender equality measures outlined in the resolution are to be realized.

We also call on the international community and partners to help Member States in need of assistance in the implementation process. An area needing immediate attention is the development of national action plans as a remedy for unsystematic and ad hoc implementation at the national level. Small developing countries such as Fiji need guidance and partnerships in the areas of capacity and technical skills on the formulation and implementation of national plans and strategies based on resolution 1325 (2000). Such action plans and strategies must be developed after wide consultations with civil society organizations and other stakeholders and should include monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

For six years, the Security Council has been seized of the issue, but, despite the achievement of some milestones, — which include the formulation of the Plan — we believe that more could be achieved. The options of a focal point and an expert-level working group to ensure the effective integration of the resolution into the Council's work are propositions that Fiji continues to advocate. As a member of the inaugural Peacebuilding Commission, we will be calling for more active efforts from both the Commission and the Support Office to ensure effective action-oriented programmes to ensure for women's involvement in peacebuilding.

Our Pacific leaders, at their meeting held in Nadi, Fiji, this week, reaffirmed their commitment to the operationalization of resolution 1325 (2000) in Forum Island countries. The secretariat of the Forum has been charged with providing appropriate technical assistance to member countries through the frameworks of the Pacific Plan and the 2000 Biketawa Declaration.

We also commend other partners, and in particular the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), which has been a strong player in advancing the resolution through its programmes on women, peace and security in the region, for their support and assistance in national programmes. Fiji has been a direct beneficiary of UNIFEM support programmes in the Pacific, for which we are grateful, and we ask other United Nations agencies to follow suit.

A project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) — "Resolution 1325 for policy makers and non-governmental organizations" — in Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Fiji will see the training of a core group of women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and key policymakers on resolution 1325 (2000), ensure its translation into local languages and adopt appropriate strategies for its implementation.

Women in Fiji have been active in peacekeeping efforts, even though we continue to be confronted with challenges and limitations that include a lack of capacity and of an appropriate policy to ensure their full integration and empowerment. It is in that regard that we seek greater assistance and partnership opportunities, including the sharing of experiences, to enhance the participation of our women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Gender training

conducted by the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre for some Fiji police and military units, particularly those involved in peacekeeping activities, is an example of effective partnership at the local level.

In Fiji's Women's Plan of Action 1999-2008 we have clearly acknowledged our commitment to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by bringing about further progress in gender equality through various empowerment strategies for women in Fiji. Whilst we have yet to fully realize the potential of our women, the prevalent political will and the efforts of our Government and civil society, coupled with the support of United Nations agencies and the international community, should yield positive results with respect to the implementation of the resolution in Fiji and the Pacific region.

The President: I now call on the representative of Guinea.

Mr. Sow (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, I would like to thank you for your welcome initiative in holding this public debate on women and peace and security, and focusing it on the roles of women in the consolidation of peace. I am grateful to you for the important concept paper (S/2006/793, annex) which you have given us as a guide. I would like to commend all those who have spoken from the Secretariat and the various bodies concerned for the richness of their statements.

As we meet following the commencement of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, it is up to us to give new political and operational impetus to the implementation of the commitments, strategies and plans of action that have been adopted and pertaining, *inter alia*, to conflict prevention and management and to post-conflict peacebuilding.

In order to achieve the objectives by the deadlines, we should fully support the implementation of the principles highlighted in the background text provided by the President of the Security Council aiming, in particular, at achieving the participation of women on an equal footing in the maintenance and building of peace and security; protecting women and girls against violations of their rights, especially sexual and sexist violence and the trafficking of women, and taking measures to put an end to impunity; ensuring the participation of women on an equal footing in decision-making bodies and in policies, programmes,

budgets and institutional reforms at the local, national, regional and international levels; and providing sufficient technical and financial assistance for training and capacity-building, research and documentation on women.

Beyond the implementation of these principles, special attention should be given to certain key aspects of the follow-up to resolution 1325 (2000) as they pertain to the complex challenges of peacebuilding. Therefore, it would be desirable, first, at the national level, to support women's initiatives and actions in order to promote peace and reconciliation; to ensure a smooth transition towards sustainable development; to guide the Government and all national stakeholders, especially non-governmental organizations and civil society, so that resolution 1325 (2000) can spur action and remain at the heart of the peace and development process.

In this context, and in order to commemorate the anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), the First Lady of the Republic of Guinea is organizing today in Conakry, under the auspices of her foundation, the Maman Henriette Conté Foundation, various cultural activities and a conference to promote in Guinea and in neighbouring countries the spirit of that historic resolution on women, peace and security.

With the support of the Government, a United Nations country team and, above all, Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the First Lady of Guinea wishes also to pay tribute to the active contribution of the Guinean office for the Network of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians (NAWMP) supported by the Manu River Union Women's Association in conducting negotiations which foster the restoration of peace, stability and reconciliation in the subregion.

Secondly, at the regional and international level, we must take effective steps to compel all those concerned to conclude partnerships and alliances with the authorities, groups and women's networks at the local and national levels, with a view to the coordinated and complete implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

We must also work to enhance various types of women's activities in countries which are emerging from conflict or which have long been affected by conflict, by providing sufficient professional technical

capacities, making available the appropriate resources and providing access to various sources of power and responsibility.

A review of resolution 1325 (2000) from the standpoint of peacebuilding represents a source of hope for the women of Guinea, of Africa and of the entire world. This hope must not be in vain. It could be fulfilled if the entire international community shouldered its responsibilities, demonstrated the necessary political will and acted in conformity with its commitments.

Finally, my country would like to take this opportunity, as a Friend of resolution 1325 (2000), to reaffirm its full commitment to the complete success of the current work of the Security Council.

The President: I call now on the representative of Lesotho.

Mr. Maema (Lesotho): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), namely, Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and my own country, Lesotho.

We thank the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Assistant Secretary-General, Peacebuilding Support Office, for their informative presentations.

We welcome the report of the Secretary-General (S/2006/770) and consider it to be a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women, peace and security. We therefore commend the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women for the pivotal role it played in the preparation of the report. Also commendable is the positive response of other United Nations entities that have contributed towards the successful implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and of the System-wide Action Plan.

The adoption by the Security Council of resolution 1325 (2000) was a big step towards the

protection of women in conflict situations and a recognition of the substantial difference that women make when actively involved in conflict resolution and peace processes. We therefore highly commend the commitment shown by the Secretary-General in commissioning a study to review the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan. We are confident that the findings of the study will be instrumental in accelerating the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

We are encouraged by the fact that the study showed that considerable progress has been made by all stakeholders in implementing resolution 1325 (2000). That demonstrates the importance we all attach to the resolution, which, if implemented effectively, can save millions of lives. The resolution recognizes the impact of armed conflict on women and stresses the importance of women's equal participation in resolving conflicts and thus in promoting peace and security. We are therefore convinced that, with more women taking an active role in peacebuilding processes, much can be achieved.

The pivotal role that women play when trained in the area of early warning in order to prevent conflict is well understood by our Governments. Indeed, it has been noted that women are among the first to sound the alarm about looming conflicts in the areas where they live. Unfortunately, their voices continue to be ignored. In that regard, we concur with the observation in the Secretary-General's report that concrete measures are necessary to strengthen capacity-building in the field so as to ensure women's full participation at all stages of a peace process, especially in the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements.

We therefore appreciate the measures taken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to hold regular meetings with women representatives in countries affected by conflict. However, it is a hard fact that in most countries there are very few female representatives, as women are generally not involved in politics and do not hold decision-making positions. It is in that regard that SADC stresses the importance of giving priority to the empowerment of women, thereby enabling them to participate in politics and decision-making.

SADC condemns acts of sexual violence perpetrated against women and girls, especially by members of United Nations peacekeeping missions and

personnel of other international organizations tasked with protecting women in situations of armed conflict. It is disheartening when those charged with the mandate of protecting civilians during armed conflict prey on the most vulnerable members of affected communities. We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's strategy to address acts of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in United Nations peacekeeping missions. In addition, we welcome in particular how that effort is reflected in the terms of appointments for United Nations police, military observers and so on. Needless to say, the significant progress noted in this area must be accompanied by further concrete efforts.

Accelerated implementation of the recommendations is essential to the realization of the goals of resolution 1325 (2000). We need to address the gaps and challenges uncovered in the report of the Secretary-General in order to enable the United Nations system to effectively implement the System-wide Action Plan. Member States also have the critical role of supporting the United Nations system and monitoring progress to make sure that implementation is successful. We in SADC pledge to do our part.

In conclusion, we support the Secretary-General's recommendation to the Security Council that the System-wide Action Plan be renewed beyond the year 2007.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Egypt, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt): I would like to start by commending Japan for its decision to convene this meeting and by expressing our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report (S/2006/770) on women, peace and security. I would like also to thank all the speakers who made introductory statements today.

As we review today the first progress report on the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), we have some mixed feelings of achievement coupled with confusion. The questionnaire that was addressed to 39 United Nations entities on the status of the implementation of the resolution and the Action Plan resulted in responses from only 29 entities. The report does not indicate whether the rest of the entities refused to cooperate with the study or just neglected

the subject. We would appreciate further clarification in that regard.

In the meantime, it was surprising to my delegation to read, in paragraph 38 of the report, of the clear acknowledgment that the System-wide Action Plan is established not as a United Nations system-wide strategy, but rather as a compilation of planned or ongoing activities by United Nations entities in those areas for action where expertise and resources are available. That serious statement clearly indicates that States Members of the United Nations are not leading the process of the advancement of women, which should be done by defining specific mandates that the Secretariat must implement to the best of its ability, in particular in areas related to the issue of women and peace and security.

The two focus group discussions that took place in the process leading to the preparation of the report limited their scope only to members of the Security Council and the so-called Friends of resolution 1325 (2000), on the one hand, and to the Non-governmental Organization Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, on the other. It did not include the wider membership of the General Assembly. This subject is interlinked with the original mandate of the General Assembly and the treaty bodies established to monitor these important issues — foremost among which is the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Such principal organs and treaty bodies should have a say in formulating such a strategy. Furthermore, classifying Member States as friends or non-friends of the resolution establishes an artificial divide that leads to misunderstanding and that should be deleted from the report. We all support enhancing the role of women in the areas of peace and security. There are no friends or enemies of resolution 1325 (2000).

The report addressed a wide range of activities that are being dealt with by the United Nations, revealing many gaps and challenges. But the underlying theme, which we fully support, is that efforts exerted to enhance the links between women and peace and security should be carried out at the national level, and that the role of the United Nations is to support those efforts, thereby codifying national ownership of such efforts according to the capacity of the country concerned and taking into consideration the specificities of each country in conflict or in the peacebuilding process.

In addressing the institutional gaps and challenges, we must admit that the spread of uncoordinated activities through 39 entities in the United Nations system and beyond, coupled with a weak system of accountability and a lack of resources from the regular budget — with almost full dependence on voluntary contributions that are earmarked to certain countries — all constitute a recipe for failure. We must admit that the main question under consideration should be whether the advancement of women and efforts aimed at gender equality should be dealt with in all entities of the Secretariat, with a closely coordinated mechanism that ensures achieving results, or whether that should be centralized in certain sections of the Secretariat. The report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment will be crucial in focusing our discussions on whether we centralize or decentralize how women's issues are addressed within the Organization.

Our efforts at this stage should concentrate on widening the scope of consultations to include all States Members of the United Nations as well as the new organs, in particular the Peacebuilding Commission. That will provide a solid foundation for redrafting the System-wide Action Plan to reflect what States Members of the Organization would like to see done, and to allocate the necessary funds for its implementation from the regular budget. We believe that the Action Plan should become a complete United Nations strategy, with clearly defined objectives, whose implementation the Secretariat must ensure.

The President. I now give the floor to the representative of El Salvador.

Mrs. Gallardo Hernández (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): El Salvador welcomes your initiative, Mr. President, to hold this open debate of the Security Council to commemorate the sixth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. There is no doubt that the resolution is the basis for a cross-cutting examination of gender issues in the area of post-conflict peacebuilding. In that way it opens up the possibility for the active participation of women in peace negotiations and national reconciliation processes.

The Peacebuilding Commission provides a new opportunity to implement the cross-cutting approach to

gender issues proposed in resolution 1325 (2000). Establishing lasting peace requires that we promote the participation of women in decision-making at all levels, and especially in political and economic areas.

On the basis of our experience, we can say that the participation of women in peace negotiations is complementary to peacebuilding efforts. It promotes reconciliation and the incorporation of women fighters and insurgents of the opposition movements into legitimate institutions. That is why we believe it important that a specific official be appointed within the Peacebuilding Support Office, who would be responsible for following up on the incorporation of the gender perspective in peacebuilding strategies both in the Organizational Committee and in country-specific meetings. It is also critical to ensure the gender perspective in the Commission's substantive work on peacebuilding, reconciliation and development.

We must also recognize that the experiences of women and girls and their participation in the context of armed conflict, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, reconstruction and reconciliation are different. Today, sadly, we know that women and girls have become strategic targets in armed conflicts, a situation that is completely unacceptable to the international community.

El Salvador recognizes the complexity of the consequences of armed conflict. On the basis of our own experience, we see, *inter alia*, how international migration is in part influenced by that situation. We therefore deem it appropriate to focus on the gender repercussions of international migration following a conflict, particularly when it is a direct consequence of war. We should also understand how this situation disproportionately affects women and girls.

It is a widely acknowledged fact that there is an increasing feminization of international migration. It is therefore essential to promote a cross-cutting gender analysis of that phenomenon so as to implement measures to protect women's human rights.

It is also important to note the linkage between gender issues and peacekeeping operations within the United Nations. There have been numerous debates about the need to promote a gender perspective in peacekeeping operations in order to mitigate the negative impact of illicit activities committed by individuals participating in peacekeeping operations

and related to various types of violence against women. The time has come for action.

Similarly, we should encourage the initiatives of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to strengthen institutional mechanisms to promote the growing incorporation of gender mainstreaming into various peacebuilding operations. We therefore favour the establishment of gender units within peacekeeping operations themselves.

El Salvador welcomes the United Nations efforts to implement resolution 1325 (2000), in particular the guide for national action planning on women, peace and security drawn up by the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. We believe that the drafting of national action plans to implement the commitments undertaken under resolution 1325 (2000) is undoubtedly an innovative and necessary step if progress is to be made in gender mainstreaming in peace and security.

In conclusion, I reaffirm El Salvador's support for resolution 1325 (2000) and its commitment to achieving progress in gender mainstreaming in all domains as an effective strategy for reducing poverty, empowering women and achieving the sustainable development that we all desire.

The President: I call on the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Mohamad (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): As I am addressing the Security Council for the first time, I extend special congratulations to you, Sir, on your wise and skilful presidency of the Council this month. We have interacted with your distinguished presidency throughout the month, including on all relevant matters, and you have been a source of inspiration and wisdom to us.

In that context, I must also offer you our full appreciation for the importance that the Security Council has continued to attach to the promotion of peace in the Sudan.

In discussing the issue of women, peace and security, we note the importance of the Security Council's role, as manifested in its resolution 1325 (2000), which sets out a comprehensive plan of action on the status and role of women in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations, the obligations set out in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the provisions of the Outcome

Document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, on women, development and peace for the twenty-first century, in particular those concerning women in armed conflict, which

"Ensure and support the full participation of women at all levels of decision-making and implementation in development activities and peace processes, including conflict prevention and resolution" (GA resolution S-23/3, Annex, para. 86 (b)).

God abhors all conflict and war. Human rights and international humanitarian law are violated whenever wars erupt. War is war. War is a source of deep regret that the great majority of those affected by armed conflict are civilians and that women and children are the most vulnerable and directly hurt segment of society, often becoming refugees and internally displaced persons.

We note in that respect the Security Council's request to the Secretary-General to submit a system-wide action plan to implement resolution 1325 (2000), including major areas of action in the field of women, peace and security and providing a framework for relevant inter-agency activities, and to address this issue through strategies to promote the gender perspective, confidence-building, and the development of local and regional women's organizations to complement the role of the United Nations at the regional and local levels.

The promotion of the gender perspective in areas of conflict requires reconstruction and rehabilitation programmes to incorporate the promotion of women's practical participation in those areas by providing technical assistance, particularly training programmes for women in the fields of health and education. In that respect, we rely on the relevant United Nations agencies and bodies — including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNICEF — to coordinate inter-agency programmes for women and girls.

We note in that respect the experience of the UNDP project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which encountered certain difficulties in raising awareness in that country on gender issues in

the implementation of its disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme.

At the national level, women's issues have been among the Sudan's major priorities. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the Darfur Peace Agreement both included provisions to guarantee the role and active participation in peacebuilding and the implementation of its articles. Our traditions and values accord women a particularly distinguished role that takes into account their nature, preserves respect for them and safeguards their rights, over and above the requirements of these agreements and instruments. Since independence, our national legislation has given women a pioneering role and promoted their active participation in all spheres.

Allow me to underline the fact that the Sudanese parliament was the first legislative institution in the region, during the period of national independence 50 years ago, in which women participated in free elections, representing different segments of the political spectrum. That principle has not changed since independence; women are allocated a specific quota in the parliament — more than in most countries in the region.

Because of that early start, representation and participation by women has continued to grow over time. Women are represented at all levels of decision-making, from the presidency of the Republic, to the Cabinet, the parliament and, finally, various institutions and ministries, in addition to their strong presence in civil society organizations. Therefore the participation of Sudanese women, side by side with men, in the process of bringing about peace is already a reality in terms of the issues with which we are dealing today.

We are fully confident that today's Council debate on the question of women, peace and security will have a positive effect on the status and the role of women in today's world. We would like to propose that the remarks made by various delegations today lead to a comprehensive action plan concerning women, peace and security.

The President I thank the representative of the Sudan for the kind words he addressed to the presidency.

Next I call on the representative of Israel.

Mrs. Shahar (Israel): Mr. President, at the outset, I would like to thank you for having convened this open debate on women, peace and security as we mark the sixth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000).

This year also deserves special recognition as the thirtieth anniversary of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). Since 1976, UNIFEM has provided financial and technical assistance to thousands of innovative initiatives around the world aimed at fostering women's empowerment and gender equality. UNIFEM has undoubtedly touched the lives of women and young girls in more than 100 countries. Here at the United Nations especially, UNIFEM has helped to make the voices of women heard on critical issues and advocated for the implementation of commitments made to women around the globe by the nations of the world.

Israel believes that women must play an equal role in all aspects of State affairs and in civil society. We have no doubt that the advancement and progress of women will translate into nothing less than advancement and progress for all. As such, Israel remains committed to the principles and goals of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as to the principles outlined in the Outcome Document adopted by our leaders a year ago.

We welcome the Secretary-General's United Nations System-wide Action Plan, which will help ensure that closer attention is paid to gender perspectives in conflict-prevention and peacekeeping activities. Similarly, we encourage the Secretary-General to continue to identify women candidates for senior-level positions within the United Nations system, with particular attention to special representatives. We trust that this will remain a priority for the incoming Secretary-General as well.

The mainstreaming of gender into all policies and programmes at the international and national level is a crucial factor in the prevention of sex discrimination, exploitation and abuse. If women are ever truly to see their needs recognized and interests represented in peace accords, they must have access to peace negotiations from the earliest possible stages. To that extent, Israel has been working, through Government and non-governmental channels, to increase awareness and amplify the voice of women in peace negotiations and conflict resolution processes.

In Israel, programmes such as *Isha l'Isha* — meaning "woman to woman" — continue to implement resolution 1325 (2000) through a variety of means, including, but not limited to, distributing Hebrew translations of the resolution; distributing and disseminating information on the resolution to national, regional and non-governmental bodies; campaigning to raise awareness through public relations work and media coverage; and monitoring and documenting the impact of conflict on women and girls. *Isha l'Isha* has also contributed documents and information to the Israeli parliament's research centre, which is working to create legal recommendations for the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in Israel.

Similarly, the Israeli Women's Equal Rights law was amended a year and a half ago, in the spirit of resolution 1325 (2000), mandating the Israeli Government to include women in any group appointed to participate in peacebuilding negotiations and conflict resolution.

It may be worthwhile to note that some of the key mediators currently involved in promoting the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are women, among them our very own Foreign Minister, Tzipi Livni; United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice; Greek Foreign Minister Theodora Bakoyannis, who chaired a special meeting of the Security Council just last month; German Chancellor Angela Merkel, the British Foreign Secretary and many other prominent women — women who are today the effective stewards of a political peace initiative in our region. These extraordinarily competent women, drawing on their own skills and, hopefully, on the work of the resilient and vigorous Israeli-Palestinian women's peace movement, bring a renewed energy and dynamism to the negotiations.

However, the election of Hamas, a terrorist organization, to the leadership of the Palestinian Authority has stalled the negotiation process. Additionally, it has made the identification of women leaders and representatives to peace negotiations from the Palestinian side all the more difficult.

On the other hand, there is a visible movement of Israeli women, from across civil society and the political spectrum, advocating for peace. The recognition and effectiveness of such advocacy organizations and non-governmental organizations is a

testament to the vibrancy of Israeli democracy and pluralism. Israel takes great pride in their leadership.

More specifically, in the spirit of resolution 1325 (2000), Israeli and Palestinian women, under the auspices of the International Women's Commission for a Just and Sustainable Israeli-Palestinian Peace, met again this year here in New York. Their recent visit, which took place last month during the opening of the session, at the time of the general debate, facilitated meetings with key players in regional and peace negotiations, in an effort to restart dialogue and open more channels.

Israel is determined that women should play an increasingly active role in peace negotiations, and we are committed to advancing the role of women in all aspects of society. We are hopeful that an enhanced role for women in peace negotiations will build lasting bridges of understanding with our neighbours and allow for the reopening of a dialogue to rejuvenate the prospects for peace.

As Golda Meir, Israel's only woman Prime Minister to date, once said: "The only alternative to war is peace. The only road to peace is negotiation."

The President: I now call on the representative of Croatia.

Mrs. Mladinen (Croatia): At the outset, allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to commend the Japanese presidency for having organized this debate to mark the sixth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security.

Croatia aligns itself with the statement made by Finland on behalf of the European Union. I would like to elaborate on a few of my Government's views on the matter.

Why is resolution 1325 (2000) so important for us? Because it calls for the protection of women and girls in conflicts worldwide and gives women an active role in peacebuilding as well as in post-conflict situations. Croatia believes that it is of the utmost importance for the Security Council to discuss this issue, but that it is even more important that resolution 1325 (2000) be implemented.

The international community must not remain passive in the face of gross violations of human rights. In the twenty-first century, it is unacceptable that women in conflict worldwide are still being used,

taped and tortured, even as an instrument of war. It is even more humiliating for the international community that women too often become victims in post-conflict situations. Perpetrators must be punished without exception. If we send protection, we must guarantee protection. All of this is exactly why it is crucial to give women a more prominent role in peacebuilding processes.

Croatia firmly supports the statement of the European Union that gender should be incorporated into every aspect of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office, and that gender equality is a prerequisite for peace and security.

Croatia believes that it is an international, yet also a national responsibility to stop the marginalization of women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We are putting a lot of effort into increasing the involvement of women in peacekeeping operations, especially among military and police observers. Through national mechanisms, like the recently adopted national policy for the promotion of gender equality for the period of 2006 to 2010, special measures for achieving the integration of a gender perspective in national security policy, as well as the promotion of application of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), are being incorporated. Although figures show some progress in this issue, there is still a great challenge in front of us and higher goals still to be achieved.

Today, we are calling for the greater representation of women in the process of negotiating peace, post-war reconstruction and reconciliation. We must continue to encourage the main bodies of the United Nations, particularly the funds and programmes, to strengthen the participation of women in their work and to streamline gender issues.

In conclusion, only by enhancing the role of women in peacebuilding processes, but especially in decision-making processes, can we achieve the fulfilment of the principles contained in resolution 1325 (2000) for the benefit of all.

The President: I now call on the representative of Myanmar.

Mr. Swe (Myanmar): My delegation greatly appreciates the initiative taken by you, Mr. President, in holding an open debate on women, peace and

security on the sixth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). As a result of that landmark resolution the international community looks upon women, not merely as victims in conflict situations, but also as valuable contributors in the resolution of conflicts and as active participants in rebuilding their communities. We also wish to thank the four senior United Nations officials for their briefings and for the good job they do for the cause of women and girls.

The 2005 World Summit Outcome, by clearly underscoring the fact that "progress for women is progress for all," gives special importance to the promotion of gender equality and the elimination of gender discrimination. The Summit Outcome also identifies gender mainstreaming as a tool for achieving gender equality. My Government fully shares this view. We also share the view that gender equality plays an essential part in advancing development, peace and security. In our national efforts to promote gender equality, tradition and culture play an important part.

Myanmar traditional law guarantees the free and equal rights of women, including the right to own and inherit property. It also ensures secure tenure of property and housing for women.

The Government of the Union of Myanmar, hand in hand with such organizations as the Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation, the Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs Association and the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, promotes policies to ensure that the needs and priorities of women, girls, men and boys are addressed systematically.

The results of all these efforts are most evident in the area of education. The enrolment of girls now equals that of boys in the primary and secondary levels. At the tertiary level, overall enrolment of women surpasses that of men.

Myanmar's traditions, culture and values, which abhor and prohibit the sexual exploitation of women, strongly contribute to the Government's endeavours to protect women and girls from human rights abuses, including sexual and gender-based violence. We fully support the zero tolerance policy with regard to violence against women and girls.

My delegation shares the view that development, peace, security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. In situations of conflicts, women and girls are among those who suffer most. My country

suffered from almost five decades of insurgency. Through the determined efforts of the Government we have been able to achieve national reconciliation, with 17 major armed insurgent groups returning to the legal fold. The representatives of the former insurgent groups have now joined other delegates in the National Convention that is laying down the basic principles of our new constitution. Women of Myanmar are also taking an active part in the National Convention process.

Terrorism constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. It knows no national boundaries. Women in Myanmar, with the Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation at its forefront, have taken on nationwide campaigns to condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

In implementing resolution 1325 (2000), we also need to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender. My delegation is pleased to note, from the report of the Secretary-General, that United Nations entities are focused on developing policies and operational tools to facilitate gender mainstreaming and that regular gender training is provided for all categories and levels of peacekeeping personnel. We are also happy to learn that progress has been made in implementing United Nations action plan for implementing resolution 1325 (2000), including in such areas as conflict prevention, early warning, peace making and peace building. The report also shows that much more needs to be done.

My delegation is encouraged by the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and hopes that the Commission, by complementing national efforts, will play an important part in promoting the role of women in the consolidation of peace.

The President: I now call on the representative of Kenya.

Mr. Muburi-Muita (Kenya): I join other delegations in congratulating you, Mr. President, on the excellent stewardship of the work of the Security Council and especially in organizing today's debate on women, peace and security. We have been enriched by the incisive contributions presented thus far.

A year ago, the President of Kenya, His Excellency Mr. Mwai Kibaki, stated in the General Assembly:

"Kenya affirms the centrality of gender equality and recognizes the critical role that women must play in development. We also recognize that achievement of the Millennium Development Goals depends on the empowerment of women. As part of our effort to fully attain this objective, my Government has adopted a national policy on gender development. The aim is to integrate women in decision-making through legal, regulatory and institutional reforms." (A/60/PV.10, p. 10)

In this room a month or so later, my predecessor spoke passionately during a session similar to this one, emphasizing the centrality of mainstreaming gender and, in particular, of including women at all levels while addressing security issues, especially during post-conflict peacebuilding measures.

Last Friday, in keeping with his solemn pledge to include women at all levels in decision-making, President Kibaki decreed that 30 per cent of all public service jobs would be reserved for women henceforth. In his words, he said,

"The women of this country provide a critical mass for our economic development ... However, there is a serious imbalance between the number of women employed in the public service and that in the private sector and in the leadership of the country in general ... I therefore call upon the public service to apply affirmative action in new employment by ensuring that a minimum of 30 per cent of new recruitment and appointments in public service establishments are women."

Kenya expresses its deep gratitude to the Secretary-General for the comprehensive report on the status of implementation of the resolution, in particular through the System-wide Action Plan developed in 2005.

The report showcases the key sectors where tangible progress has been achieved and identifies the gaps and challenges in implementation. While expressing gratitude for the four excellent presentations from the Secretariat this morning, I must, however, hasten to add that, despite the progress made, numerous challenges still stand in the way of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). These challenges include: a lack of capacity to understand and implement gender mainstreaming programmes; an

unfortunate lack of leadership and commitment in implementing the resolution; a lack of adequate accountability mechanisms; a lack of resources; and limited inter-agency coordination. In view of these challenges, we welcome the comprehensive recommendations made in the report of the Secretary-General aimed at overcoming these challenges and strengthening implementation of the resolution.

Kenya appreciates the fact that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has made great strides in promoting gender balance among peacekeeping personnel. The incorporation of full-time gender advisers in peacekeeping missions has been very useful in this regard. Although gender balance is far from having been attained, we have taken steps in the right direction. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations should redouble its efforts towards achieving this goal. It must develop and disseminate to States, especially troop-contributing States, effective guidelines to ensure sustained efforts in gender mainstreaming at all levels of peacekeeping operations.

In response to resolution 1325 (2000), Kenya has made deliberate efforts to increase the participation of women in peacekeeping missions. Currently, we have women in uniform deployed in six out of the eight peacekeeping missions in which we are engaged. We are determined to raise this number.

Resolution 1325 (2000) emphasized the need to incorporate gender perspectives in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding. We are happy to note that there has been increased attention to the role of women in the post-conflict rebuilding process, especially in the judicial, legislative and electoral sectors, as well as in the restoration of the rule of law and transitional justice. Women still need considerable support and capacity-building to be effective in new democratic and legal structures that were traditionally dominated by men.

We continue to encourage the United Nations Development Fund for Women in its role in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), especially in promoting the role of women in peacebuilding and post-conflict transition, in particular on the African continent. However, limitations in funding and resources threaten to undermine this effort. We urge member States to explore strategies that will ensure the alignment of resources with priorities and the provision

of adequate and regular funding for activities related to the implementation of this resolution.

Finally, Kenya strongly endorses the recommendation for the need to re-conceptualize the Action Plan in order to strengthen its accountability, monitoring and reporting system and to ensure enhanced coordination across the United Nations system. Establishing a Security Council working group, or designating a focal point on women, peace and security issues, as recommended by the Secretary-General, would ensure systematic integration and implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The President: I now call on the representative of Liechtenstein.

Mr. Ritter (Liechtenstein): I wish to commend the Japanese presidency of the Security Council for holding this open debate on the role of women in the consolidation of peace. This initiative is not only timely because of the sixth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), but it is also particularly important, because the Peacebuilding Commission has recently taken up its work and held its first country-specific meetings. The outcome documents of both meetings include references to resolution 1325 (2000).

Whether such references will ensure the successful involvement of women in the peace processes in those and other countries will depend, to a very large extent, on the measures taken and promoted at the local level. In fact, we have witnessed, in many processes of peace consolidation and institution-building, a common pattern of relegating family law and community dispute resolution to the traditional and customary sectors, putting them beyond the reach of the State. Quite often, those sectors show, however, strong resistance to the idea of equal participation of women in all decision-making processes, including peace processes. As long as such types of tacit arrangements between national and traditional authorities persist, it will be extremely difficult to translate national strategies for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) into concrete and sustainable action.

For this reason, we consider it crucial that the Peacebuilding Commission establish the necessary mechanisms to facilitate, together with the countries concerned, the participation of representatives of local women's groups and networks who are able to make

the voices and priorities of women from local and rural communities heard in country-specific configurations. Such mechanisms will also have to encompass financial and other support to those groups and networks in order to enable their effective engagement with the Peacebuilding Commission.

The Security Council could assume leadership in such efforts by setting the right example and increasingly listening to the voices of local women's groups as well. This would be a clear sign of its commitment to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). While we commend the Security Council for its measures to further mainstream resolution 1325 (2000), we are concerned that, six years after the adoption of this historic resolution, the Council still has no systematic way of ensuring the integration of a gender perspective in its work. We therefore wish to join other delegations in calling on the Council to establish a focal point or an expert level working group on women, peace and security to ensure the systematic implementation and integration of resolution 1325 (2000) within its work, including in all resolutions that establish or extend peacekeeping missions and in terms of references for Security Council mission trips and mission reports.

Despite the past efforts of many stakeholders, there seems to be a continued and widespread lack of awareness of the fact that women need to be enabled to play an active role in connection with armed conflict and peacebuilding. The United Nations and its operations on the ground are perfectly placed to utilize this largely untapped resource and, in this respect, we wish to commend the Secretary-General for his report on the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan (S/2006/770). In particular, we welcome the identification of strengthened inter-agency cooperation in the field as a priority area for further action to implement the Plan. In the same connection, we also support the emphasis placed on closer collaboration with mechanisms for gender equality and advancement of women within countries, including women members of parliament and civil society. In fact, most United Nations entities that have contributed to the evaluation have signalled effective partnership with civil society as a challenge, especially in the field, and pointed out that the networking with women's organizations was inadequate.

For many years now, Liechtenstein has been advocating the appointment of women as special

representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General, because we are convinced that such appointments can play a catalytic role for the stronger involvement of women in peace processes, especially when those processes reach a more formal stage. They might also have a positive impact on the level of reporting on gender-related issues to the Security Council, which is still unsatisfactory. Therefore, we consider such appointments as crucial for better implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The progress made in the representation of women in these leadership positions since the last time the Council met on this topic has, however, been disappointing. We are, of course, aware of the need to provide the Secretary-General with the names of potential, well-qualified candidates for such posts, and we invite all interested States and non-governmental organizations to join forces in gathering the necessary information. There is no doubt in our minds that there are enough suitable candidates for such posts. We just have to look for them.

The President. The last speaker on my list is the representative of Comoros, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Aboud (Comoros) (spoke in French): On behalf of my Government, first of all, I would like to thank the delegation of Japan for convening this public debate. I would also like to thank this morning's speakers for their briefings and for having demonstrated the importance and constant commitment of the international community to the advancement of women, to peace and to security throughout the world.

As the Security Council knows, since its independence in 1975, my country has not experienced a stable political situation. This has prevented the key elements of Comorian society from becoming dynamically involved in our country's progress and development.

In such a context, Comorian women have not been able to exercise any real political influence in decision-making involving the future of the Comoros. However, with the election of His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Abdallah Sambo, President of the Union of the Comoros, my country has now begun a new political era.

The success achieved in the national reconciliation process begun by Comorians with the immeasurable support of the entire international

community and all the development partners of Comoros offers Comorian women a real opportunity to participate in decisions involving the future of Comoros, since my country has resolutely committed itself to the path of democracy, the rule of law, good governance.

In 2000, when the Security Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000), my country was caught in a crisis. That prevented it from becoming truly involved in the establishment of mechanisms to ensure advancement of the status of women throughout the world. My country, the Union of the Comoros, signatory of the Convention on the Elimination of Forms of Discrimination against Women,

Gender equality is guaranteed by the constitution of the Comoros. The Union of the Comoros subscribed to the Declaration of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, and the African Platform for Action and, at the regional level, ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights. In so doing, it recognized, guaranteed a broad range of political, civil, economic and cultural rights for women. In spite of this favourable political and legal framework, it is evident that Comorian women continue to play a marginal role in the decision-making process and are hardly visible within decision-making bodies in both the public and private sectors.

In December 2003, under the auspices of the highest political and religious authorities of my country and with technical support from a United Nations team, my country organized a workshop on participation of women in decision-making, which enabled us to explore appropriate strategies for establishing a durable foundation for the effective participation of Comorian women at all levels of political decision-making.

In that regard, a project to support participation of women in decision-making enjoys financial support of the Japanese Women Development Fund and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as well as technical support from UNIFEM. That project is among Comorian Government's priorities with a view to creating a favourable environment for the participation of all Comorians in our fight against poverty, through enhancing awareness of the women's rights, providing training to facilitate the access

women to high-ranking positions and strengthening existing structures and mechanisms for promoting gender equality.

My country takes this opportunity to appeal to all our partners and friends here to be so kind as to give their support to that and similar projects, as they make it possible to promote the status of Comorian women. That would enable my country to contribute to the success of resolution 1325 (2000), which opens up wider horizons for the promotion of the status of women throughout the world, in order to make our world a secure world with equality for all, a world that is truly committed to the recognition, defence and promotion of human rights.

I cannot conclude without thanking the development partners of the Comoros, who are helping to strengthen its capacity for defending and promoting women's rights, in particular the Government of Japan, UNIFEM and UNDP, for their financial support to this important project, which will help to fulfil my country's commitments to the international community and its citizens to defend and promote the rights of all Comorian men and women. Long live international cooperation.

The President: After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council.

"The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and recalls the statements by its President of 31 October 2001 (S/PRST/2001/31), 31 October 2002 (S/PRST/2002/32), 28 October 2004 (S/PRST/2004/40) and 27 October 2005 (S/PRST/2005/52) as reiterating that commitment.

"The Security Council recalls the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcomes of the Conference and of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and the Declaration of the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women (E/CN.6/2005/11).

"The Security Council recognizes the vital roles of, and contributions by, women in consolidating peace. The Council welcomes the progress made in increasing participation of women in decision-making in several countries emerging from conflict and requests the Secretary-General to collect and compile good practices and lessons learned and identify remaining gaps and challenges in order to further promote the efficient and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

"The Security Council recognizes that the protection and empowerment of women and support for their networks and initiatives are essential in the consolidation of peace to promote the equal and full participation of women and to improve their human security, and encourages Member States, donors and civil society to provide support in this respect.

"The Security Council recognizes the importance of integrating gender perspectives into institutional reform in post-conflict countries at both the national and local levels. The Security Council encourages Member States in post-conflict situations to ensure that gender perspectives are mainstreamed in their institutional reform, ensuring that the reforms, in particular of the security sector, justice institutions and restoration of the rule of law, provide for the protection of women's rights and safety. The Council also requests the Secretary-General to ensure that United Nations assistance in this context appropriately addresses the needs and priorities of women in the post-conflict process.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to ensure that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes take specific account of the situation of women ex-combatants and women associated with combatants, as well as their children, and provide for their full access to these programmes.

"The Security Council welcomes the role that the Peacebuilding Commission can play in mainstreaming gender perspectives into the peace consolidation process. In this context, the Council welcomes in particular the Chairman's summaries

at its country-specific meetings on Sierra Leone and Burundi on 12 and 13 October 2006.

"The Security Council remains deeply concerned by the pervasiveness of all forms of violence against women in armed conflicts, including killing, maiming, grave sexual violence, abductions and trafficking in persons. The Council reiterates its utmost condemnation of such practices and calls upon all parties to armed conflict to ensure full and effective protection of women, and emphasizes the necessity to end impunity of those responsible for gender-based violence.

"The Security Council reiterates its condemnation, in the strongest terms, of all acts of sexual misconduct by all categories of personnel in United Nations peacekeeping missions. The Council urges the Secretary-General and troop-contributing countries to ensure the full implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/60/19). In this connection, the Council expresses its support for further efforts by the United Nations to fully implement codes of conduct and disciplinary procedures to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse, and enhance monitoring and enforcement mechanisms based on a zero-tolerance policy.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to include in his reporting to the Security Council progress in gender mainstreaming throughout United Nations peacekeeping missions as well as on other aspects relating specifically to women and girls. The Council emphasizes the need for the inclusion of gender components in peacekeeping operations. The Council further encourages Member States and the Secretary-General to increase the participation of women in all areas and all levels of peacekeeping operations, civilian, police and military, where possible.

"The Security Council reiterates its call to Member States to continue to implement

resolution 1325 (2000), including through the development and implementation of national action plans or other national-level strategies.

"The Security Council recognizes the important contribution of civil society to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and encourages Member States to continue to collaborate with civil society, in particular with local women's networks and organizations, in order to strengthen implementation.

"The Security Council looks forward to the report of the High-Level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment and hopes this will play a role in ensuring a coordinated United Nations approach to women and peace and security.

"The Security Council welcomes the first follow-up report of the Secretary-General (S/2006/770) on the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) across the United Nations system. The Council requests the Secretary-General to continue to update, monitor and review the implementation and integration of the Action Plan and report to the Security Council as stipulated in the statement by the President of the Security Council of 27 October 2005 (S/PRST/2005/52)."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2006/42.

I thank all Council members, all the delegations that spoke under rule 37, the four speakers from the Secretariat and agencies, and the two speakers from civil society for their important contributions to the debate this morning and this afternoon.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.